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Trouble Comes to C. I. A., And Dulles Must Talk

By Warren Rogers Jr.

WASHINGTON.

The Central Intelligence Agency, undoubtedly the world's most publicized secret service, is exposed once more to the hot and searching glare of publicity.

This time it may be in the most serious trouble of its brief, turbulent life. It seems unlikely that, as it has so often in the past, it can emerge this time unscathed. When the ashes of the Cuban blunder have been sifted, prospects are that the freedom or functions of the C. I. A. will be limited, perhaps both.

Allen W. Dulles, the brisk, lantern-jawed director of the agency, is averse to any major change in the way it works. He thinks it is on the right track, although, as he has said, "in intelligence work, one should never be satisfied and always seek to improve."

The very hush-hush nature of his job puts Mr. Dulles in an awkward position. He can neither boast nor alibi, lest he compromise his sources. As former President Eisenhower put it in a 1959 speech:

"Success cannot be advertised; failure cannot be explained. In the work of intelligence, heroes are undecorated and unsung, often even among their own fraternity."

Must Explain to 4

But Mr. Dulles must now make explanations, in secret, to a four-member task force of which he is part. Gen. Maxwell H. Taylor, former Army Chief of Staff, heads the group. The others, besides Mr. Dulles, are Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and Adm. Arleigh Burke, Chief of Naval Operations.

Their stated job is to make "a government-wide study of para-military operations within the government." But their primary attention will be turned to the C. I. A., since it is an open secret that the C. I. A. financed, organized, trained and directed the ill-starred assault on Cuba.

In the wake of that failure, two attacks are being made on the agency, one old and one new. The first is that the C. I. A. is too secret—only a handful of men know how many people it employs and how much it spends—and Congress should have a watchdog committee keeping tabs on it. The other is that the C. I. A. should stick to spying and quit running operations like the Cuban exiles' attack on the Bahia de Cochines.

Since the C. I. A. was created in the National Security Act of 1947, dozens of resolutions have been introduced in Congress to set up some kind of Congressional watchdog committee. Usually, the Senate-House committee which oversees the Atomic Energy Commission is cited as an example. Last March, such a measure was introduced by Rep. Edna Kelly, D., N. Y. In the past, Sen. Mike Mansfield, D., Mont., now the Majority Leader, has strongly advocated similar surveillance.

$500 Million a Year?

Many others in Congress have complained about being kept in the dark about the C. I. A. Not more than sixteen senior members of the Senate and House Armed Services and Appropriations Committees know about its appropriations, hidden in funds voted for other agencies. A good guess as to the total: about $500,000,000 a year.

Powerful elements in Congress, notably the House and Senate Rules Committees, have blocked watchdog measures heretofore. They have agreed with Mr. Dulles' contention that he is keeping Congress adequately informed.

The new demand, which former Vice-President Nixon is reported to favor, would restrict the C. I. A. to intelligence gathering and analyzing. It is interesting, perhaps, that no such clamor arose when pro-Communist regimes were overthrown in Iran in 1953 and Guatemala in 1954. The C. I. A. is understood to have had a hand in both.

At sixty-eight, Mr. Dulles is near the end of a long and distinguished career. Like his brother, the late Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, he started out in diplomacy and law. But the intelligence bug bit him during World War II.

Reported Brilliantly

With the cloak-and-dagger Office of Strategic Services, he reported brilliantly from Switzerland on Nazi military operations—what he calls a "pipe dream compared with what we now have to meet" in the pathologically secretive domains of the Communists.

Mr. Dulles came to Washington in 1948 as head of a three-man committee to survey America's intelligence system. He joined the agency in 1950 and was named director in 1953.

Before World War I, the United States had no intelligence system, a fact in which many Americans took pride. And even as late as the 1920s, Congress usually appropriated less than $200,000 a year for military intelligence. Despite the lesson of Pearl Harbor—that adequate information was available to anticipate the attack but there was no centralized evaluation—no permanent or completely co-ordinated intelligence system was developed during World War II.

It was against this background that Congress handed the C. I. A. a broad mandate in the 1947 National Security Act. Its chief job by law is to correlate all intelligence, evaluate it and report to the National Security Council. It thus works closely with military services, the State Department, the F. B. I. and the Atomic Energy Commission. But it was further ordered to perform "other functions and duties" as directed by the National Security Council. And its payroll and expenditures were cloaked in secrecy.

90 Out of 1,000 Get In

It's tough to get a job in the C. I. A. Out of every 1,000 applicants, about 800 are screened out by personnel officials. The 200 others are turned over to security agencies for investigation. Of those, about seventy are rejected because they drink too much, talk too much, have relatives behind the Iron Curtain, [illegible] susceptible to Communist pressure, and [illegible]. About forty are turned down for serious security reasons, such as Communist backgrounds or other affiliations. That leaves about ninety out of 1,000 who are accepted, and then only on a closely watched trial basis.

Most of the "raw" intelligence which flows into the C. I. A. comes from perfectly innocent sources. It is gleaned from books, magazines, newspapers, radio broadcasts, statements and speeches—the whole gamut of the public reflections of a nation. Only a small amount comes from out-and-out spies.

Sifting it, fitting together pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, judging capabilities, guessing at intentions, settling on probabilities, sniffing out the false lead—all this goes into the processing. It is a tedious, unglamorous business. But it is where quality counts.

Mr. Dulles is in daily contact with many government agencies and with many parts of the world. Once a week, he sits down with the heads of other intelligence agencies to review the finished product. Their agreed intelligence estimate goes to the National Security Council. Daily, he and the other intelligence units send reports to the President.

Mr. Dulles guards against too much agreement in the processing. He encourages split reports rather than what he calls "a wishy-washy product that comes when people who don't really agree try to find vague expressions to bridge a disagreement—the worst thing in intelligence."